



## **Building connected knowing between medical and local populations**

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**Conference track:** Contexts and methods: Theoretical and conceptual frameworks, research designs, and methodological issues

**Format:** Research/Scholarly paper

### **Summary**

This presentation discusses how universities can connect with and contribute to local medical partnerships. By using rhetorical theory and providing results from a two-year ethnographic study with an emergency medical services (EMS) squad, this speaker will provide attendees with information on how they might develop community-based research projects with medical organizations.

Scholarship on community engagement in medical rhetoric (the study of “languages and texts of health or illness from a rhetorical point of view”) is slim (Heifferon & Brown, 2008, p. 2). Medical rhetoricians connect rhetorical viewpoints to the ways in which the medical field creates and disseminates health knowledge. Moreover, scholars have not yet studied all communication and partnerships involved in EMS, including how Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and paramedics interact with other professionals, such as emergency room physicians, emergency room nurses, and researchers (Blanford & Wong, 2004; Rowland, 2003; Avtgis, Polack, Martin, & Rossi, 2010; Munger, 1999, 2000). Community engagement scholars are well prepared to contribute to the medical field due to their training in research and collaboration.

Through ethnographic research methods, including participant observation, surveys, and interviews that applied Blandford and Wong's (2004) Critical Decision Method, data sources were collected and then analyzed using grounded theory (Creswell, 2009). Findings from this study suggest assemblage theory provides a dynamic, productive way to understand aspects of EMS communication, pedagogy, and engagement efforts due to the theory's emphasis on relations and interaction.

Those interested in partnering with medical organizations and local communities will find this presentation useful. One of the leading questions in medical rhetoric will be answered: How can scholars engage with and contribute to medical community partnerships? By providing results from a study and suggestions based on research, this speaker will address this question and provide attendees with information to help them develop similar projects at their institutions.

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